

CC96-48

Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units

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April 30, 1997

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MAY 20 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

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OFFICE OF
COMMISSIONER
SUSAN NESS
MAY 8 2 23 PM '97

The Honorable Susan Ness, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW, Room 844
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness:

As a Pennsylvania Intermediate Unit Executive Director, I would like to thank you for your dedication in ensuring that all school districts and education consortia will have affordable access to the Information Superhighway.

The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board decision will guarantee that all school districts will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all of our schools, and importantly, the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internet classroom connections is vital. This plan is essential for preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

ARIN Intermediate Unit 28 serves as an Internet Service Provider to our local districts, vocational-technical schools, and public libraries (as do many of our sister Intermediate Units across the Commonwealth). Even though we provide these services at well below market rates, there are many institutions in our rural area that simply cannot afford Internet connectivity. The discounts provided in the Telecommunications Act will enable them to establish these desperately needed connections.

Our students need deep discounts for telecommunications services this year. I urge you to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Carey, Ed.D.
PAIU President

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jl

SCOTT REGIONAL HOSPITAL

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P.O. Box 259

Morton, MS 39117

Tel. (601) 732-6301 - Fax (601) 732-8970

CC 96-45

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MAY 20 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

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May 8, 1997

Commissioner Susan Ness

Contact: Janice Wise

Fax: 202-418-2821

Dear Commissioner Ness:

It is our understanding that the Federal Communications Commission is scheduled to vote this week to adopt regulations governing "universal service" policies as part of the implementation of the Telecommunication Act of 1996.

The universal service policies of the Act mandate that the FCC direct telecommunication rate subsidies to schools, libraries and rural health providers. In the case of health care, the FCC must make telecommunication rates for eligible health care providers comparable to telecommunications rates for similar services in urban areas.

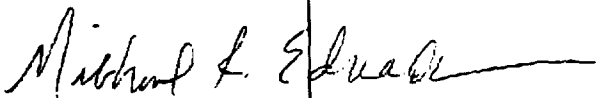
The goal of this provision is to lessen the difference between the quality of health care services available in urban areas and those in rural areas, many of which suffer from a lack of health care resources and access to medical professionals, as well as the burden of being at greater distances from advanced medical technology and treatment facilities.

We feel that "telehealth" has the potential to help our member hospitals and health systems improve the quality and lessen the cost of health care delivery in rural areas. That's why we hope to help keep the telecommunications costs for our facilities as low as possible by adopting the following policy positions related to universal service provisions:

- *Universal service should support distance charges.
- *Universal service should support toll-free connections to the Internet

Thank you for your immediate consideration and support on this issue. If I can provide additional information, or be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Edwards
CEO

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MRE:pd



Gilmore Memorial Hospital

1105 Earl Frye Boulevard

Amory, Mississippi 38821

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May 7, 1997

MAY 20 1997

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

Commissioner Susan Ness
FAX: 202 418-2821Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Commissioner Ness:

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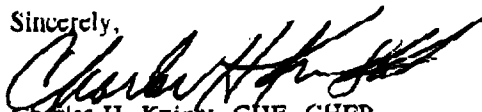
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- * Universal service should support toll-free connections to the Internet.

Thank you for your immediate consideration and support on this issue. If I can provide additional information, or be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Charles H. Knight, CHE, CHFP
Vice President/CFO

CHK/bh

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North Sunflower County Hospital
RECEIVED *Dedicated to Community Health*

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MAY 20 1997

360 North Oak Street • P. O. Box 369 • Telephone 601/756-2711

Ridgely, Mississippi 38771

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

May 6, 1997



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SUSAN NESS

Commissioner Susan Ness

FAX #202-418-2821

Dear Commissioner Ness:

It is our understanding that the Federal Communications Commission is scheduled to vote this week to adopt regulations governing "universal service" policies as part of the implementation of the Telecommunication Act of 1996.

The universal service policies of the Act mandate that the FCC direct telecommunication rate subsidies to schools, libraries and rural health providers. In the case of health care, the FCC must make telecommunication rates for eligible health care providers comparable to telecommunications rates for similar services in urban areas.

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1. Universal service should support distance charges.
2. Universal service should support toll-free connection to the Internet.

Thank you for your immediate consideration and support on this issue. If I can provide additional information or be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

ROBERT L. CROOK
Administrator

RLC/cb

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Portland Public Schools

Administrative Offices
331 Veranda Street, Portland, Maine 04103-5599
207-874-8100

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MAY 20 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary



May 6, 1997



The Honorable Susan Ness, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W. Room 844
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness,

I am the Superintendent of Maine's largest school district in the State with 8,300 students. I want to thank you for your consideration of action that all schools have affordable access to the Internet and are provided with opportunities for distance-learning.

In a rural state like Maine, these technological opportunities provide an important element in educational equity. The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board Discount Plan will guarantee that even the poorest or the most rural schools will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide for distance-learning opportunities. The approval of this Act will address the needs of all our schools, and more importantly, the plan will ensure direct services to the classrooms where students learn. The inclusion of the internal classroom connections discount is imperative to provide equitable educational opportunities for students, regardless of where their family resides.

This plan is essential for preparing our students for their future and I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Sincerely,

Mary Jane McCalmon
Superintendent

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SHELL POINT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FRANKIE S. MIDDLETON
PRINCIPAL

TERRY BENNETT
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL



EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

April 29, 1997

Susan Ness, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M. Street, N.W., Room 832
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner,

There is positive excitement in our school and school district about having access to the Information Superhighway, and using it as a tool to help all children become successful life long learners. I appreciate your committed and dedicated efforts towards the implementation of the affordable E-Rate.

The potential for telecommunication learning and Internet connectivity made available through the Telecommunications Act and the Federal State Joint Board discount plan will ensure that all children have the opportunity to have quality experiences with technology. The funding at its current level will substantially support our school's initiatives and enhance the provision of services in the classroom where technology can be infused into the curriculum and be readily available to all students. Educating children for the 21st century will become a reality in direct proportion to the availability of internal classroom connections.

Our technology plan, which emphasizes technology as a valuable resource in teaching and learning and a process for bringing unlimited learning possibilities to students, need the significant discounts for telecommunications services this year. Our schools and libraries must have the FCC to completely support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service, as without the discount, the cost will prohibit the level of Internet and telecommunication usage required to develop the technology proficiencies of the students and staff.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Frankie Middleton
Principal

Cc: file

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81 SAVANNAH HWY.
BEAUFORT, SC 29902
(803) 525-4274
(803) 525-4280 FAX

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CC 96-48
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May 1, 1997

Susan Ness, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M St. NW, Room 832
Washington, D.C. 20054

Dear Commissioner Ness:

I write in support of meaningful discounts on telecommunications services for schools and libraries so that every school child and life-long learner can have access to the world of information technology. The Telecommunications Act - through its Universal Service Fund provisions - mandates the development of special discount rates for all schools and libraries so that they can secure services at affordable prices.

There is no doubt that advanced telecommunications services are important to improving learning, sparking the imagination and leveling the playing field for all our nation's people. Affordable access to technology in all classrooms and libraries will assure that our children and life-learners can connect with the technology they would need to compete in today's and tomorrow's workforce. Advanced telecommunications services in the classroom will also create informed and skilled consumers of new technology well into the 21st century. As of now our school system is unable to afford Internet capabilities to extend access to each classroom. Our local telephone company has been reluctant to give our schools reduced rates. We would like for our students to have the same opportunities that are afforded to students in more affluent areas. Without the passage of the Telecommunications Act, there is very little hope that we will ever be able to provide this opportunity.

Last November, the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service sent to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) a set of recommendations for implementing the Universal Service Fund provisions related to the schools and libraries. These recommendations would give our learning institutions significant discounts on all services that are commercially available, with deeper discounts for those schools and libraries least able to pay and more expensive to service. All schools would get discounts on connections to classrooms and Internet connectivity, both of which are essential to providing the most advanced learning opportunities to the greatest number of students.

I urge your support for the Joint Board's recommendations. Taken as a whole, they will provide affordable discounts for a full range of services needed to meet each community's diverse needs. Most importantly, these provisions, if adopted by the FCC, will make advanced technology for learning available to all Americans.

Sincerely,

Mr. & Mrs. James E. Wilkes

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

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Date: 5/8/97
To: Commissioner Susan Ness
Fax number: (202) 418-2821

From: Craig M. Slater, M.D. *MSA*
Hospital Medical Director
Memorial Hospital at
Gulfport
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Our phone: (601) 865-3565
Our fax: (601) 865-3214

of pages including cover page: 1

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

I understand that the Federal Communications Commission is voting this week to adopt regulations to govern "universal service" policies as part of the implementation of the Telecommunication Act of 1996. I further understand that the Act mandates that the FCC direct telecommunication rate subsidies to rural health care providers, amongst others.

This subsidy for rural health care providers is essential to the continuing integration of our health care system--it allows these rural health providers easy electronic access to resources and professionals that they otherwise could not obtain. Because of the importance of this issue, I urge you to support universal service that:

- a) supports distance charges, and
- b) supports toll-free connections to the Internet.

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